

On pages 5-6, please replace paragraph [0023] with:

Q3

[0023] The valve portion 20 is preferably molded from an elastomeric or similarly resilient material such as silicone. Such a material is advantageous because it can be pierced and remain fluid-tight after removing the piercing implement. Thus, a channel or piercing 32 is defined by the valve portion 20 and provides a path for a rigid inflation tube to follow when inserted into the balloon, thereby preventing the valve portion 20 from being damaged by the insertion of an inflation tube during an implantation operation. The piercing 32 leads from the inlet 24 to the inner chamber 72 through the valve body 22 and the valve stem 26. Preferably, the piercing 32 begins in the inlet 24 along a longitudinal axis 34, which is shared by the inlet 24, the valve body 22, and the valve stem 26. The piercing 32 continues along this longitudinal axis 34 until it reaches a predetermined location in the valve stem 26 where a curved portion or bend 36 is formed in the piercing 32, such that the piercing 32 exits the side 28 of the valve stem 26. The bend 36 is advantageous in that it enhances the ability of the silicone to close the piercing 32, thereby making the chamber 72 fluid-tight when the piercing 32 is not held open by a substantially rigid member. A close look at FIG. 1 shows how the valve stem 26 stretches and flattens during inflation. It can be seen that bend 36 of the piercing 32 forms somewhat of a flap 37 which is held closed by the pressure contained within the inner chamber 72.

On page 7, please replace paragraph [0029] with:

AK

[0029] For purposes of manufacture, a skirt 54 is provided that extends downwardly from the valve body 22. The skirt 54, preferably, has an outer diameter that is smaller than outer diameter of the valve body 22. The skirt 54 provides an attachment area so that the valve body 22 may be more readily handled during manufacturing. The smaller outer diameter of the skirt 54 creates a ridge 56 which is used to provide a visual and tactile definition of a lower extent of the valve body 22 and an upper extent of the valve skirt 54 such that the skirt 54 may be removed without removing any material from the valve body 22. The ridge 56 also creates a stop in the event that a dipping mandrel 80 (e.g. FIG.'s 4B, 4C and 4D) is used to manufacture the device 10. The mandrel 80 is preferably sized such that the skirt 54 frictionally fits within an open end of the mandrel 80. The valve body 22, however, is too large to fit within the mandrel 80. The use of the mandrel 80 will be explained in more detail below.